

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5**

DATE: October 1, 1999

SUBJECT: Reports of Significant Developments and Activities
Ending on September 24, 1999

FROM: William E. Munro, Director
Superfund Division

TO: Francis X. Lyons
Regional Administrator

David A. Ullrich
Deputy Regional Administrator

The activities listed below are organized by site-specific activities, other significant developments, and training/conferences:

SITE-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Response (Chemical Gas Release), Dynecol Inc., Detroit, Michigan

On September 22, 1999, over 400 children at the Cooper Elementary School were evacuated by the Detroit Fire Department when a chemical gas release by a Dynecol waste management facility caused an acidic gas cloud. The gas release contained a mixture of nitrogen oxide, nitric acid, and chlorine gas compounds. The release was caused by a ruptured pressure valve on a tanker truck. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) became involved with the site when the Detroit Fire Marshall asked for assistance. U.S. EPA On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) from Grosse Ile, Kurt Grunert and Ralph Dollhopf, began assisting the Detroit Fire Department (the lead agency on the incident) by monitoring the air quality within the surrounding area. Air samples (about 50) did not show any detectable levels of a threat to human health. The principal of Cooper School kept the school closed until Dynecol Corporation cleaned and sanitized the residual left from the gaseous leak. On September 27, 1999, students and faculty returned to school.

Contacts: Kurt Grunert (313-921-0325)
Ralph Dollhopf (734-692-7682)
Ginny Narsete (312-886-4359)

Oil Response, Calumet Sag Channel, Alsip, Illinois

On September 22, 1999, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Paul Steadman responded to the Calumet Sag Channel in Alsip, Illinois, at the request of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) to investigate an oil release of unknown origin. The Alsip City Fire Department had called Illinois EPA for assistance. An eye-witness reported two blue 55 gallon drums and one 5-gallon sized bucket being dropped into the channel. OSC Steadman met with Illinois EPA's Dan Knopke and the Deputy Alsip Fire Chief, Joseph Schmitt, to assess the situation and then initiated response actions. Response actions included accessing the emergency response oil spill fund and mobilizing the Emergency and Rapid Response Services (ERRS) contractors to deploy oil absorbent boom pads. The placement of the booms and pads contained the oil. A total of 25 55-gallon drums containing the oil contaminated materials were generated and staged at this site, and disposed of properly.

Contact: Paul Steadman (312-353-7615)

Removal Begun and Site Tour, South Central Terminal Site, Pana, Illinois

In August, 1999, as a result of a request for assistance by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA), a Superfund Removal cleanup began at the South Central Terminal site in Pana, Illinois. The site, a former petroleum refining facility, includes above ground storage tanks, crude oil pipeline, petroleum refining process buildings, and other buildings. In August 1999, U.S. EPA established field support and decontamination facilities, and mobilized the mobile water treatment system. U.S. EPA will be pumping out the tanks and consolidating the waste for disposal. The expected time for removal completion is Spring 2000.

Pana public officials, including the Mayor, four newspapers, and one news station were given a tour of the site by Emergency Response Branch (ERB) On-Scene Coordinator Steve Faryan and Ginny Narsete, ERB Public Affairs Coordinator. (The tour was preceded by a press release by Mick Hans, Office of Public Affairs.) The newspapers published stories, and the Springfield Register made it the main front page story on September 22, 1999. Ms. Narsete found that local citizens were pleased with the U.S. EPA activity and wished to be kept informed of the cleanup activities. Their major concern was soil/water contamination and the odor of the ammonium sulfate.

Contacts: Leonard Zintak (312-886-4246)
Steve Faryan (312-353-9351)
Kevin Turner (618-997-0115)
Pete Guria (312-353-1909)
Ginny Narsete (312-886-4359)
Mick Hans (312-353-5050)

Final Remedy Selected (Monitored Natural Attenuation/Construction Completion), Electro-Voice Superfund Site, Buchanan, Michigan

On September 21, 1999, U.S. EPA signed a Record of Decision (ROD) that selected a remedy of monitored natural attenuation, institutional controls, and contingency actions for the off-property groundwater contamination at the Electro-Voice Superfund site in Buchanan, Michigan. Within the area, homes and businesses are supplied by City water, and local ordinance prohibits the installation of drinking water wells. The primary contaminants are trichloroethene and vinyl chloride. The primary natural attenuation processes affecting the off-property groundwater contamination are stream capture and dilution, with some biodegradation. Cleanup levels for the groundwater are expected to be attained in 53 to 66 years, and the estimated present worth cost of the remedy is \$145,000. Negotiations to conduct the remedial design and remedial action are anticipated to begin with the potentially responsible party in December 1999.

Two lagoons, a dry well area, and the more highly contaminated groundwater beneath the site were addressed in previous cleanup actions. This final site remedy does not require physical construction, so this ROD is also a construction completion.

Contact: Karen Cibulskis (312-886-1843)

Press Event on Completion of Cleanup, Cedar Services Site, Bemidji, Minnesota

On September 8, 1999, the Office of Public Affair (OPA) coordinated a press event announcing the completion of the cleanup at the Cedar Services site in Bemidji, Minnesota. The Brownfields site is an abandoned wood treatment facility that was cleaned up in two phases during 1997 and 1999 by U.S. EPA at the request of Minnesota Department of Agriculture. OPA worked with the On-Scene Coordinator to schedule the event. A news release included quotes from Regional Administrator Frank Lyons and the Bemidji Mayor. Media coverage included Bemidji Pioneer, KAWE-TV, Minnesota News Network radio, and KKEQ-KKCQ (a radio station that reaches northwest Minnesota and eastern North Dakota).

Contacts: Mick Hans (312-353-5050)
Michelle Jaster (312-886-7193)
Ginny Narsete (312-886-4359)

**Administrative Complaint Filed (Proposed Penalty of \$138,050),
Pepsi-Cola General Bottlers, Munster, Indiana**

On September 23, 1999, the Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention filed an Administrative Complaint against Pepsi Cola Bottlers, in Munster, Indiana. The Complaint alleges that Pepsi violated Section 103(a) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and Sections 304(a) and (c) of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), and assesses a proposed penalty of \$138,050. On November 16, 1997, Pepsi experienced a release of approximately 3,150 pounds of anhydrous ammonia. Ammonia is a CERCLA hazardous substance with a reportable quantity of 100 pounds. This release was 31.5 times the reportable quantity. The release was the result of over-pressurization of their refrigeration system. The release migrated beyond the Facility's boundaries and caused the evacuation of the Pepsi Facility. Pepsi did not notify the National Response Center (NRC), State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), and Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) until approximately 14 hours after the release began, and submitted written follow-up reports 9 days after the release. CERCLA and EPCRA require immediate reporting of releases and the submission of written follow-up letters no later than 7 days.

Contact: Ruth McNamara (312-353-3193)

**Final Inspection and Open House, Clare Water Supply Superfund
Site, Clare, Michigan**

On September 22, 1999, U.S. EPA Region 5 hosted an open house to update residents on the near-final cleanup at the Clare Water Supply Superfund site in Clare, Michigan. The open house and optional site tour were held from 3:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m., September 22, 1999, at the soil treatment building located at 519 West Fifth Street in Clare. Representatives from U.S. EPA, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and the potential responsible parties (PRPs) were available to discuss the most recent cleanup work, including installation of water and soil treatment systems, on an informal, one-on-one basis. The open house was preceded by a final inspection of the soil treatment facility that was constructed in Clare and a meeting between the State, U.S. EPA, and PRPs to discuss modifications to the remedy that could enhance its effectiveness.

Contact: Jon Peterson (312-353-1264)

Proposed Plan Public Meeting, Pagel's Pit Superfund Site, Rockford, Illinois

On September 8, 1999, the Office of Public Affairs (OPA's) Community Involvement Coordinator facilitated a public meeting regarding the proposed cleanup plan at the Pagel's Pit Superfund site in Rockford, Illinois. About 50 residents attended, as well as local media and a representative from a Congressional office. Most of the questions focused on whether U.S. EPA could shut down the landfill and the reason U.S. EPA has proposed natural attenuation instead of active treatment. The residents also brought up local issues that are not under U.S. EPA's jurisdiction. After the meeting, U.S. EPA stayed for well over an hour to answer additional questions about the plan.

Contacts: Gordie Blum (312-353-8501)
Bernard Schorle (312-886-4746)

Sampling Plan Approved and Field Sampling Begun, Sauget Area 1 Site, Sauget and Cahokia, Illinois

On September 9, 1999, U.S. EPA approved the Field Sampling Plan for the Sauget Area 1 site located in Sauget and Cahokia, Illinois. The sampling plan was completed by Solutia, Inc. in accordance with an administrative order by consent dated January 21, 1999. Solutia's consultants began actual field sampling work during the week of September 13, 1999. The sampling work involves the collection of soil, sediments, surface water, groundwater, and waste samples from six different disposal areas and residential properties, as well as approximately 3 miles of Dead Creek. During the six to eight months the sampling is expected to take, Solutia will collect over 6,000 samples. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rapid Response Team will oversee the sampling. Once the field sampling is complete, Solutia will write an ecological risk assessment and a human health risk assessment. They will then write an engineering evaluation/cost analysis (EE/CA) for the source areas and a remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) for groundwater. A public meeting was held in Cahokia on August 30, 1999, to explain and answer questions about the upcoming work to interested residents.

Contact: Mike McAteer (312-886-4663)

Public Meeting and Media Briefing, Valleycrest Landfill Site, Dayton, Ohio

On September 16, 1999, the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) coordinated a media briefing and a public meeting to provide an update on the scope of work at the Valleycrest Landfill cleanup. U.S. EPA recently confirmed that it expects to find about 25,000 buried drums in the half of the site where the Potential Responsible Party (PRP) group has begun excavating. The previous estimates were much lower. Significantly, the site lies between the two well fields that provide drinking water to the Dayton metropolitan area. An afternoon media briefing drew three television stations, the Dayton Daily News, and an Associated Press reporter. U.S. EPA arranged for a Dayton Fire Department bucket truck to take television camera people up about 70 feet above the landfill, allowing them to zoom in on the excavation work. The evening meeting was attended by 80 residents, many of the media representatives, and representatives from Ohio EPA, the City of Dayton, and the PRPs. The meeting was taped for re-broadcast on Dayton municipal cable television. USA TODAY also picked up the story and ran it the following day as the paragraph from Ohio.

Contacts: Mick Hans (312-353-5050)
 Leo Rosales (312-353-6198)
 Steve Renninger (513-569-7539)

Federal Facility EPCRA Inspection , U.S. EPA Vehicle and Fuel Emissions Laboratory, Ann Arbor, Michigan

On September 21, 1999, George Rancich and Bill Sandstrom, Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP), conducted a Federal Facility Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) compliance inspection at U.S. EPA's Vehicle & Fuel Emissions Laboratory in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The inspection was conducted jointly with Jim Rioux, Waste, Pesticides, and Toxics. The Facility stores and uses EPCRA 312 reportable quantities of gasoline, diesel fuel, and ethylene glycol. The reporting requirements and the Facility's reporting practices were reviewed along with their documents and procedures related to release reporting and chemical storage. A report covering EPCRA 302-312 will be submitted to the Facility documenting the findings and suggestions, if applicable, to help maintain their compliance.

Contacts: George Rancich (312-886-6148)
 William Sandstrom (312-886-6024)

Public Meeting, Sauget Area 1 Site, Sauget and Cahokia, Illinois

On August 31, 1999, the Office of Public Affairs (OPA's)

Community Involvement Coordinator facilitated the kickoff meeting for the start of environmental sampling at the Sauget Area 1 Superfund site. The Remedial Project Manager gave a brief history of the site and an overview of the sampling plan. OPA distributed a fact sheet about the sampling and discussed future community involvement opportunities and activities. Area 1 covers about 40 acres, including a four mile stretch of an intermittent stream known as Dead Creek, and is contaminated with a number of chemicals, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxin. One problem is that many residents near the site live in a flood plain, and after heavy rains, the creek tends to flood their basements.

Contacts: Gordie Blum (312-353-8501)
Mike McAteer (312-886-4663)

Public Affairs (Chemical Gas Release Response), Dynecol Inc., Detroit, Michigan

As discussed in the article above, on September 22, 1999, over 400 elementary school children were evacuated due to an acidic gas cloud. The Detroit Fire Department who was the lead agency on the disaster, asked U.S. EPA, Dynecol, Detroit Health Department, Detroit Public Schools, and the Detroit Emergency Management Agency to participate in a public meeting on September 25, 1999, to inform the parents of the of the incident.

Ginny Narsete, Public Affairs Coordinator for the Emergency Response Branch, assisted the Detroit Fire Department, Cooper Elementary School, and the Detroit Health Department Public Affairs Staff write fact sheets and news releases, and gave advice on handling community concerns. Although, on September 27, 1999, students and faculty returned to school, the community is still concerned of potential future threats. Involvement with the community will continue throughout the next few months. Both OSCs Kurt Grunert and Ralph Dollhopf were interviewed by television and newspapers, and were broadcast on the Detroit News Stations throughout the weekend. The multi-agency cleanup approach helped the overall process of the incident.

Contacts: Kurt Grunert (313-921-0325)
Ralph Dollhopf (734-692-7682)
Ginny Narsete (312-886-4359)

Public Affairs, Kirby Tire Fire, Sycamore, Ohio

On August 23-24, 1999, the Office of Public Affairs (OPA's) Community Involvement Coordinator provided assistance for the

emergency response to a fire at the Kirby Tire site. OPA conducted formal press briefings on August 23-24, 1999. Local law enforcement and fire control officials, U.S. EPA On-Scene Coordinators, and an Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) spokesman spoke at the press conferences. OPA worked with the Ohio EPA media director to establish a communications link with area media. OPA also contacted the Mayor, Town Administrator and School Superintendent concerning heavy trucking activity that would coincide with the start of the school year. Media interest was understandably heavy. OPA handled inquiries from three major networks, Canadian Broadcasting Service and one Windsor newspaper, in addition to local and regional print outlets.

Contacts: Stuart Hill (312-886-0689)
 Jennifer Ostermeier (312-353-0618)
 Karla Auker (216-522-7260)
 Mark Durno (313-692-7687)
 Jason El-Zein (313-692-7661)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

Review, Minnesota State Emergency Response Commission, St. Paul, Minnesota

On September 17, 1999, Ruth McNamara and Glenn Cekus, Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP), met with representatives of the Emergency Response Commission (ERC) in St. Paul, Minnesota to conduct a review. The purpose of the review is to help U.S. EPA better determine the methods used to implement Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA) Title III Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) in the State. Also covered in the discussions, were potential joint projects between the State and U.S. EPA to enhance EPCRA compliance, outreach, training, and technical assistance within Minnesota. Special emphasis was placed on Minnesota's enforcement policy, which is really a compliance assistance program. Minnesota's policy of designating their Regional Review Committees (RRCs) as Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), without the RRCs doing actual planning, enforcement, or EPCRA data management, was also a focal point of discussion. The State reviews will be prepared and shared with the States prior to the Regional State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) conference in November 1999.

Contact: Glenn Cekus (312-353-6449)

TRAINING/CONFERENCES**Pesticides Seminar, Indianapolis, Indiana**

On September 21, 1999, Ruth McNamara, Office of Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention (OCEPP), attended a seminar entitled, "Management of Pesticides Products." This seminar was a Supplemental Environmental Project conducted by Lowes Home Center as agreed upon in a Consent Agreement between U.S. EPA and Lowes. The Consent Agreement was the result of an Administration Complaint issued against Lowes pursuant to Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), for failing to notify the National Response Center (NRC) of a release of 6 pounds of diazinen at their Fort Wayne, Indiana store. Lowes received the diazinen from the manufacturer with incorrect labels. The labels stated the wrong volume of the contents. Rather than sending the diazinen back to the manufacturer, Lowes poured the contents of twelve 32 ounce bottles into a 30 square foot area behind the store.

The seminar provided an educational forum for other retailers and emergency response personnel regarding the safe handling, storage, transportation, disposal, cleanup, and reporting of spills of pesticide products. The seminar was well attended and very informative.

Contact: Ruth McNamara (312-353-3193)

cc: Steve Herman (OECA)
Barry Breen (OECA)
Tim Fields (OSWER)
Steve Luftig (OSWER)
Larry Zaragoza (OSWER)
Region 5 State Superfund Coordinators
Division/Office Directors
ORA State Coordinators
Regional Team Managers